



# Cellulitis

**Cellulitis** is an infection of the skin and tissues below it. Most often, cellulitis occurs on the arms and legs or on the face.

## Signs & Symptoms

- Red, swollen, painful, tender, and warm skin.
- Red lines that spread from the wound.
- Swollen lymph nodes near the wound.
- Chills and fever.

## Treatment

Oral, topical, and/or IV antibiotics are given. The type(s) used depend on how serious the infection is. Medicine to relieve pain may be needed.

## Causes

Cellulitis is caused by several types of bacteria. These usually enter the body through minor skin breaks (cuts, burns, other wounds). One cause for cellulitis that recurs is community-acquired MRSA (Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*.)

## Questions To Ask

Are any of these **signs of infection** present?

- A skin area is red, swollen, hot, and/or tender.
- Increased redness or blisters occur with an existing skin wound or red lines or streaks spread from the wound.
- Fever, fatigue, muscle aches, and/or feeling ill are present with a skin wound.



## Self-Care / Prevention

### To Prevent Cellulitis

- Keep your skin clean and protect it from injury.
- Clean cuts, scrapes, and other skin wounds and injuries, thoroughly, with soap and water. Keep wounds and sores clean, dry, and covered until healed.
- To help prevent community-acquired MRSA, avoid contact with other people's wounds or bandages in schools, health care settings and sports. Do not share towels, washcloths, razors, clothing, or uniforms that may have had contact with an infected wound or bandage. Shower right after sporting events, workouts, etc.

### To Treat Cellulitis

- Follow your treatment plan. Take all of your prescribed antibiotic(s).
- Take pain relievers as directed.
- Rest the affected area. Elevate it to reduce swelling.